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ABSTRACT

The document is an outline of a one-year correspondence course in American History for students at the secondary and college levels. The course objective is to provide the students with a picture of America's people during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through the use of literature. The student is required to read a certain number of books of his choosing and to complete the lessons which pertain to each book. The lessons consist of writing or essay assignments. The course is organized around the following six units: the American West; Rural America; the Immigrants; Industrial and Urban America; Utopian America; and Political Problems. Each unit is prefaced by a general introduction and consists of two or three reading and writing assignments, followed by a bibliography of resource materials. Guidelines for independent study are included. (RM)

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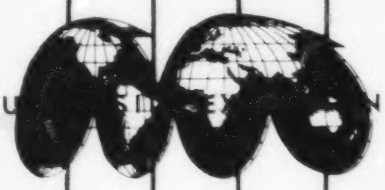

Extramural Independent Study Center

THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS / AT LAWRENCE

ED 088726

MODULAR CURRICULUM:
ENGLISH/SOCIAL STUDIES
Literature Views an Era of American Growth, 1840-1920
1970 (Rerun 1971)

Course prepared by

Greg Black
Assistant Instructor in History
University of Kansas

This module represents either nine or eighteen weeks' work; however, it can be tailored to suit individual needs. Credit is to be determined by the institution recording the work. Students enrolled through E.I.S.C. will receive 1/4 or 1/2 unit credit, depending on the number of assignments complete as specified in the Preface.

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GUIDELINES FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

1. Time Limits for Completing an Independent Study Course.

   The time allowed for the completion of this course is one year from the date of enrollment. A six-months extension will be granted upon payment of a $5 fee, which must be paid prior to the conclusion of the one-year period allowed for completing the course. All extensions become effective at the expiration of the one-year period.

2. Limit to Assignments Submitted at One Time.

   Do not submit your second lesson until the first has been returned; thereafter you may submit up to five lessons per week unless your instructor requests otherwise. If you wish to submit more than five assignments per week, you must have the permission of your instructor.

   Note: During vacation periods many instructors are away from the campus and your assignments may have to be forwarded. If you need to complete this course by a certain time, you should start work early enough that a slight delay during vacations will not adversely affect your schedule.

3. Manuscript Form.

   Assignments for most courses must be submitted on paper designed for independent study. (See the Sample Lesson at the back of this syllabus.) A pad is included with your syllabus, and you may order additional pads from the Center for $1.25 each.

   Always write your name, address, the course name and number, the number of the assignment, and the page number at the top of each page. Either type your answers double-spaced or write them neatly in black or blue-black ink, using only one side of the paper. In submitting an assignment, fold all the pages of the assignment together with the heading on the outside. (For illustration see the Sample Lesson.)

4. Mailing Lessons.

   Mail each completed assignment separately to the Center, making sure that you mail the assignments in numerical order and that the envelope bears the correct postage. *You should keep a copy of your work.* Be sure to notify the Center of any change of name or address.

5. Final Examinations.

The application for the final examination should be submitted at least one week before the examination date.

College-level examination when taken in Kansas must be given by the Independent Study Center at the University of Kansas, by officials of the other state colleges, or by supervisors at one of the Correspondence Examination Centers in the state. (For a list of Examination Centers see the Schedule of Examinations sent with your course material.)

If you wish your credits to apply toward a degree at an accredited Kansas college or university other than a state institution, you may make arrangements with the dean of that college to have your examination supervised there. Out-of-state enrollees must arrange with officials of an accredited college to have their examinations proctored. If there is no accredited college in your vicinity, you may arrange for supervision with the local superintendent of schools or a secondary school principal.

High School course examinations should be administered by your principal or superintendent of schools. You must make your own arrangements for supervision.

6. Refunds and Textbook Resale.

You may obtain a partial refund of fees upon application within three months of the date of your enrollment. The course fee minus $5 for registration and $3 for each corrected lesson will be returned to you. Course material fees will not be refunded.

Within a six-weeks' free drop period, full refund will be made for textbooks returned to the Kansas Union Bookstore or to the University Bookstore in Manhattan. The texts must be new, unmarked, and have the price stickers on them. Damaged books, including those damaged by mail, must be sold as used books. Shipping charges are not refundable.

Upon completion of a course, the University of Kansas and Manhattan bookstores will buy back books if they are currently used for independent study. The price is one-half the current new price.

7. Student Services.

You may take advantage of services offered through Student Services, which include:

* Assistance in solving problems with courses and instructors;
* Advice in planning an independent study program;
* Referral to other institutions for courses or services we do not offer.

You may write: Mrs. Vivian McCoy, Director of Student Services

Literature Views an Era of American Growth, 1840-1920

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	1
UNIT I. THE AMERICAN WEST	9
ASSIGNMENT 1. CIMARRON	12
ASSIGNMENT 2. THE OX-BOW INCIDENT	13
ASSIGNMENT 3. THE OREGON TRAIL	15
UNIT II. RURAL AMERICA	19
ASSIGNMENT 1. LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI	21
ASSIGNMENT 2. THE STORY OF A COUNTRY TOWN	23
ASSIGNMENT 3. THE LANDLORD AT LION'S HEAD	24
UNIT III. THE IMMIGRANTS	27
ASSIGNMENT 1. THE RISE OF DAVID LEVINSKY	30
ASSIGNMENT 2. THE JUNGLE	32
ASSIGNMENT 3. GIANTS IN THE EARTH	33
UNIT IV. URBAN AMERICA	37
ASSIGNMENT 1. THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM	39
ASSIGNMENT 2. THE PIT	40
ASSIGNMENT 3. MCTEAGUE	41
UNIT V. UTOPIAN AMERICA	45
ASSIGNMENT 1. LOOKING BACKWARD	47
ASSIGNMENT 2. CAESAR'S COLUMN	49
UNIT VI. POLITICAL PROBLEMS	53
ASSIGNMENT 1. DEMOCRACY	55
ASSIGNMENT 2. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS	57

Literature Views an Era of American Growth, 1840-1920

PREFACE

As you may be aware, the picture of the United States to which most high school students of American history are exposed is a governmental one. The traditional course focuses on our famous men, the major historical movements and events, or the evolution of our laws. In short, American history is usually presented as a history of our country's leading citizens and institutions, while it disregards the history of the people. In addition, most of our American history courses suffer the limitations of history texts--books which structure study in the traditional manner just described. Few teachers or students ever benefit from the many enrichening sources of historical information which lie beyond the confines of the required textbook.

The aim of this module of study is, therefore, twofold: to provide the student with a picture of America's people during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; and to paint that picture with the literature of those times. It is hoped that this approach will give the student a broader perspective of the building and developing process during a particularly vital period of our nation's history.

Because of our focus here, we will naturally be more concerned with the activities of a Nevada cowboy in 1885 than with President Cleveland's actions of that year. We will study the various types of people who settled and moved this nation, the different environments in which they lived, their hopes and expectations, their entertainment, and the methods they used to make a living. For the time being, we shall set aside the common problems of national interest and concentrate on the varied problems of the many different peoples who made up that nation. We shall view the growth of several Americas. Our efforts, then, will be directed toward understanding an historical America of heterogeneity, as dictated by the variety of human nature and environmental circumstances.

I have chosen literature--and, for the most part, novels--to be the medium of our historical study here because these authors often concentrate on the problems which are most important to the people of their times and they produce works which are enjoyable to read. However, one should keep in mind while reading selections that they do not represent historical truth. They represent the authors' views of life during a particular period and must, therefore, be read carefully and critically by the student. It may be that one or more of the novels you read will present a picture of American life or values which you feel is not accurate. In these cases, do not hesitate to discuss your reaction in your essays. For example, Upton Sinclair was reported to have once said that his primary purpose in writing THE JUNGLE was not to give an accurate historical account of working conditions in Chicago, but, rather, to appeal

to the working man to adopt socialism as the political answer to his problems. This is not to say that Sinclair's picture has no historical value, but merely to warn the student that the pictures presented in all of these books will necessarily be influenced by the authors' peculiar goals in writing them.

Course Design:

This module has been loosely organized around six units which represent most of the important areas of American life during the late nineteenth century: The American West; Rural America; The Immigrants; Industrial and Urban America; Utopian America; and Political Problems. In many ways, this breakdown is unsatisfactory: although each of these areas can be studied in isolation, they are all interrelated through many factors. As a result, after having read a selection on the American West and then another on Rural America, you may be asked to compare the people you found in each novel, their problems, their goals, etc. Depending on the selections you choose, then, it is hoped that you will attempt to assimilate and relate the ideas you glean from each unit and not deal with them as separate entities.

Each of the six units is prefaced by a general introduction in this syllabus. It is suggested that you refer to these introductions both before you begin any study or reading, and again when you are ready to read your first selection. In that way, you will be provided with the background which might stimulate your interest in an area of which you might otherwise be unaware. That same background, coupled with each novel's specific introduction (if it has one), will later serve as valuable guidelines for your reading and study in the area.

The more specific structural procedure of selecting topical areas and assignments within those areas is left to the student. It will be your responsibility to determine your own tastes and interests, and to make your selections accordingly. The only requirement that will be made of you here is that you read a certain number of books and complete the lessons which pertain to each book. If you have decided to take this course for 1/4 unit credit, you are then required to read five (5) novels and perform satisfactorily on the corresponding five assignments. For 1/2 unit credit, ten (10) novels and the appropriate assignments are required. Again, any combination of five or ten books (depending on the credit desired) is satisfactory: you may choose to acquire a broad perspective of several different areas and restrict yourself to one selection from each; or, you may want to delve into a particular topic and remain in that area for the entire course. You need not notify your instructor of any decision, although you may seek his help in coming to that decision at any time. It is recommended that you wait in selecting each book until you have completed your reading in the preceeding one, so that you will be certain whether you wish to linger on the topic or switch at a given point.

A list of the books treated in this module, along with a short summary of each, follows this Preface. This list, as well as the separate assignments on each book, should help you in your selections if you are not sure where your

interests lie. Generally, the books on the list are ranked according to their historical importance as I see it. Within each unit, then, the first entry I consider to be preferable to the second or third. This method is used only to give some direction to those students who are not acquainted with the selections and may only read one in the unit. Whether or not you choose my preference is not at all important; you are still free to read any book. I do, however, strongly suggest that you buy the Signet editions of the books you choose: their introductions will provide you with the historical perspective you need for this course.

In addition to the list of books directly dealt with in this syllabus, each unit will be followed by a supplementary bibliography. These lists are comprised for the most part of non-fiction resource materials for those students who might be interested in pursuing a topical area in greater depth. In the event that you should chose to read one of the selections from these bibliographies, it may constitute one of your five (or ten) required readings. It is suggested that you confer with your instructor before making a definite choice from these lists, as he will be most aware of the subject and scope of each selection. In any event, you must obtain his approval of your selection and establish with him a procedure on how you will handle the assignment. It is not imperative, though advisable, that you complete all other assignments in a particular unit before proceeding to its bibliography. Many of the books included in these bibliographies can be obtained from most well-equipped libraries. However, if you do not have access to such a library, you may be able to arrange to acquire the text on inter-library loan.

The Writing Assignments:

On each of the five (or ten) assignments which you elect to complete, you will be required not only to read the appropriate novel, but also to discuss it intelligently on three of several topics listed. The questions included were designed to guide your understanding and enjoyment of the book, not to plague you with any frustrating deviousness. It would be to your advantage if you would, in each case, read the questions carefully before picking up the novel and keep them in mind throughout your reading.

After you have read and thought about the novel, select three of the questions listed which are of particular interest to you and write an essay of sufficient length to answer what is asked of you. Some questions do not demand lengthy answers; nor were most of them designed to elicit the right answer. What is crucial in performing these exercises is that you think them out and then tell me how you reacted to the historical problems in the novels as you saw them (not as you think I see them).

When you submit your written assignments for grading to the Center, please entitle them consecutively even though your first assignment may be number 2 in the syllabus. That is, your first lesson submitted will be Assignment I; your second, Assignment II; and so on. In addition, you should subtitle each paper as "Urban and Industrial America 2" or whichever it may be entitled in the syllabus. The reason for this procedure is merely to facilitate the keeping

of your record at the Center and it will save their staff considerable confusion if you follow it.

The Comprehensive Assignment:

In addition to the five (or ten) assignments which you are required to complete on the five (or ten) novels you read, there will be a final comprehensive assignment which will be composed by the instructor and sent to you after all work is completed. This assignment will be tailored to the particular course which you have designed for yourself by the readings you have selected. It will consist of one all-encompassing question which will ask you to comment on the America you encountered during your study. It will not be a final exam, per se, but it will demand that you draw together all that you have learned. You may be asked to compare or contrast the society, people, values, etc. of the area(s) you have read about. This assignment is to be completed on your own, with the use of any materials you may find relevant in developing the essay. (Be sure, however, that you do account for others' ideas or statements by marking them properly.)

For those students who have enrolled in this course for 1/4 unit credit, there will be one comprehensive assignment, the sixth. Two of these assignments will be required for 1/2 unit credit, one following the first five novels read and one following the last five. Thus, there will be, in all, six assignments for 1/4 unit credit and twelve for 1/2 unit.

A Note on the Texts

You are strongly urged to use the Signet editions of the works assigned, for many of the questions are keyed to those editions. In addition all the Signet paperbacks include excellent introductions that will enhance your understanding of the literature and the time in which they were written.

READINGS

UNIT I. THE AMERICAN WEST

Edna Ferber. CIMARRON. New York: Bantam Books, 1958.
This novel describes the growth of Oklahoma from the opening land rush to the discovery of oil and the wealth it brings to the state.

Walter Van Tillberg Clark. THE OX-BOW INCIDENT. New York: The New American Library, 1960.
Clark's novel takes place in Nevada in 1885. It is a study of men and the hysteria of mob justice.

Francis Parkman. THE OREGON TRAIL. New York: The New American Library, 1964.
Francis Parkman was a famous nineteenth century historian who kept a journal while he was on the trail from Westport, Missouri, to Fort Laramie and back. He recorded his observations of frontiersmen, Indians, and the general condition of the American frontier life before the Civil War.

UNIT II. RURAL AMERICA

Mark Twain. LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI. New York: The New American Library, 1961.
This novel is divided into two parts. Part I deals with the Mississippi as the navigational problem of a cub river pilot. In part II, a retired river pilot views the river as it has changed through the years.

E. W. Howe. THE STORY OF A COUNTRY TOWN. New York: The New American Library, 1964.
A newspaper editor in Atchison, Kansas, describes his life in that rural Kansas town.

William Dean Howells. THE LANDLORD AT LION'S HEAD. New York: The New American Library, 1964.
This novel describes the change of an impoverished farm in New England to a successful summer hotel. Howells also depicts the changes in the individuals who are involved in a struggle for a place in Boston society.

UNIT III. IMMIGRATION

Abraham Cahan. THE RISE OF DAVID LEVINSKY. New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1966.
This is a story of the assimilation of a young Russian Jew into American society. It describes his rise from poverty to the top of the American garment industry.

Upton Sinclair. THE JUNGLE. New York: The New American Library, 1907.
A Lithuanian family's despair increases as the members try to survive the horrors of the American industrial society. THE JUNGLE is a close-up of the packing house conditions in Chicago during the early 1900's.

O. E. Rolvaag. GIANTS IN THE EARTH. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.
This novel deals with a group of Norwegian immigrants who travel to South Dakota to establish a homestead farm. The story reveals their thoughts, their fears, and their hardships.

UNIT IV. URBAN AMERICA

William Dean Howells. THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM. New York: The New American Library, 1963.
Silas Lapham was one of the many successful industrialists who rose from the depths of poverty to become a millionaire. This novel deals with his desire to be admitted to the exclusive Boston society of the late nineteenth century.

Frank Norris. THE PIT. New York: Grove Press, 1956.
THE PIT is the second volume in a proposed trilogy which is concerned with the growing, selling, and distribution of wheat. This novel explores wheat speculation in the huge Chicago market and the attempts of one man to corner the wheat supply.

Frank Norris. MCTEAGUE. New York: Fawcett Publications, 1960.
MCTEAGUE is a story of San Francisco around the turn of the century. This novel is a picture of the moral degeneration of the McTeague family in the urban environment.

UNIT V. UTOPIAN AMERICA

Edward Bellamy. LOOKING BACKWARD. New York: The New American Library, 1960.
Bellamy, a nineteenth century social reformer, projects a young man from the Boston of 1887 to Boston in the year 2,000. Bellamy then expounds on his utopian "perfect society" which has solved man's problems. This novel was one of the most widely read works of the century.

Ignatius Donnelly. CAESAR'S COLUMN. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1960.
Ignatius Donnelly was a leading member of the Populist Party. He ran as its candidate for the vice-presidency in 1900. In this utopian novel he forsees the ruin of civilization in the late twentieth century if the world continues on its course of privileged position for the rich.

UNIT VI. POLITICAL PROBLEMS

Henry Adams. DEMOCRACY. New York: The New American Library, 1961.

Set in Washington, D. C. in the 1870's, this novel describes the corruption of the American political system.

Lincoln Steffens. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958.

This book depicts the work of a "muckraker" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Steffens examines the governments of such cities as St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, San Francisco, and Boston and finds them all controlled by a corrupt political machine.

UNIT I

THE AMERICAN WEST

UNIT I

THE AMERICAN WEST

The American West--what was it? Was it all shoot-outs, cattle drives, Indian wars, and serious relaxation in the local saloon? The novels in this unit present three distinct views of western life from the 1840's to the beginning of the twentieth century.

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century many Americans believed the land west of the Mississippi River was only a great desert. In fact, until the 1850's map-makers labeled the area "The Great American Desert." Opinion about the value of the area was slow in change. In 1856 a man wrote in the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW that, except for a small strip of land along the eastern border of Kansas and Nebraska, the land was a desert with soil unfit for any type of agriculture. The "desert," as we know, was teeming with life and was well-suited to agriculture.

Americans first began crossing the "Great Desert" in large numbers in the 1840's. The first small parties started their overland migration from Independence, Missouri. They traveled to Fort Kearney at the southern bend of the Platte River in Nebraska, then to Fort Laramie in Wyoming, and finally turned north into Oregon and Washington. The journey from Independence to the coast was 2,000 miles; even under good conditions a wagon train could spend six months on the trail.

The land the pioneers crossed was rough and largely uninhabited. The Indian population in the vast desert and mountain country totaled 225,000, and included such famous tribes as the Sioux, Cheyenne, Pawnee, Blackfoot, Navajo, and Apache. The danger from Indian attack, which has been greatly exaggerated, was much less than the hazards of the elements, lack of direction, mode of travel, length of the trip, and terrain. In this area, the white population numbered only 175,000. These people kept on the move, farming few permanent settlements except near government forts. They prospected for precious metals, hunted, trapped, and served as guides. As late as 1860, the great plains area had only one state in the Union--Texas--and on the West Coast only California and Oregon enjoyed statehood.

As people began to pour into the West, lured by cheap farmland and gold strikes (California, 1848; Nevada, 1850; and Colorado, 1859), the movement from unorganized land to organized territory, and finally to statehood was rapid. In 1861, after a turbulent territorial history, Kansas was admitted to the Union. Nevada followed suit in 1864 and Nebraska in 1867. The rapid migration westward had begun.

According to legend, the frontier operated as a "safety valve" whereby poor, dissatisfied Eastern workers could get a new start as yeoman farmers. Like many legends about American history, however, reality was far different from the myth. A direct safety valve never operated.

For one thing, few Eastern industrial workers had either the skills or the inclination to be successful Western farmers. But ever more importantly, few factory workers had the means to become farmers in the West: it cost money to move and set up a farm. Some estimates placed the cost of transporting a family and buying land, tools, and seed at no less than $1500 for a 40-acre Western farm in the nineteenth century. For urban workers earning as little as one or two dollars a day the cost was prohibitive. Moreover the Homestead Act never lived up to its billing; far more farmers bought their land than ever homesteaded their way to prosperity.

Overall, the census figures show that the greatest migration from east to west took place during boom periods. In depressions the western surge dried up, and often the number of westerners returning to the East exceeded the numbers trekking west. The slogan scrawled on Eastward-bound covered wagons--"In God we trusted, in Kansas we busted"--summed up an all-too-familiar plight. The census figures also reveal that most of the farmers who broke the prairies of the Midwest and Great Plains were the sons of farmers in nearby states. Except for the mass migrations of European immigrants, a state like Minnesota was settled by farmers from states like Illinois and Indiana. The settlers were not the offspring of factory workers in the East.

Not all the persons moving West were farmers, of course. Laborers, artisans, and professional people also joined the movement. It was among these groups that the less fortunate urban workers could get a new start in the West. By merely removing himself and perhaps a few tools to the frontier, a worker could establish himself economically and socially much more quickly than in his old community. A mason might become a building contractor, an average lawyer might become a community leader--avenues of advance were more limited in the structured society of the East. Though many of these people were relatively poor, they were often men of ability and drive nonetheless. Uprooting oneself from the comfortable route of the East required initiative and adaptability. By a certain process of natural selection, the West was peopled with citizens of unusual ability.

These people moved west using many modes of transportation. In Parkman's THE OREGON TRAIL there is evidence that some people even attempted to walk from Missouri to Oregon. This, of course, was not the rule. Most travelled in wagons and in small organized groups; entire towns would sometimes strike out for Oregon or California. Only with the coming of the railroad did rapid, efficient transportation become possible. The first transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869. Built by the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads, the line ran from Omaha to San Francisco. Additional transcontinental routes were rapidly built under government grants and encouragement. The Southern Pacific, finished in 1881, ran from New Orleans to the West Coast, and the

Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe extended from Chicago to San Francisco. Among other things, these railroads helped make cattle raising more profitable and led to the growth of cattle towns like Sedalia, Missouri and Baxter Springs, Newton, Abilene, Ellsworth, Wichita, and Dodge City, Kansas.

The railroads also encouraged migration into western lands. They could make a profit only if their territories were populated and developed economically. The federal government recognized this need and granted the railroads large tracts of land, sometimes as much as twenty-five to fifty miles on either side of the line, which the companies could sell cheaply to pioneers. The railroads often provided free or cut-rate transporation, and several lines actively sought immigrants in Europe. The Great Northern and the Northern Pacific railroads assisted in moving thousands of Scandinavians to Minnesota and the Dakotas, for example, and the Santa Fe recruited many Germans and Russians for farms in central Kansas.

The abundance of land, the possibility of a quick strike, and the open society all served to attract people to the West. Life in the West was sometimes violent. This aspect of western life has often been exaggerated, especially in dime novels and television serials. Many communities quickly established a quiet, stable life occasionally marked even by a fairly high level of culture; moreover, many of the rural towns and small cities were a good deal safer than the large cities of the supposedly more civilized East.

The most violence occurred in areas on the fringe of settlement, especially the mining camps and cow towns. The desperadoes who have been enshrined in legend were usually outcasts who could not have fit into any organized society. An excellent example of this type of individual is Yancy Cravat in CIMARRON. The vigilante gang was also a response to lawlessness. When the federal or state governments, whether by inability or inclination, failed to establish law and order, vigilantes performed informally the functions of sheriff, judge, jury, and executioner. THE OX-BOW INCIDENT presents a view of this group in society. While the vigilantes often failed, they represented an attempt to provide police protection for the society at large. Each novel presents a distinct view of western society. In your reading be sure to analyze the forces at work in western society.

ASSIGNMENT 1

CIMARRON

Reading Assignment: Edna Ferber, CIMARRON

Writing Assignment:

Based on your reading of the novel, answer any three of the following:

1. Describe the role of a newspaper in frontier Oklahoma. Compare that role with the role played by the local paper in your home town.

2. Describe the growth of Oklahoma from a wild frontier area to statehood. Consider the changes in the territory, the people involved, the standard of living, the economy, and the society.

3. Comment fully on the following statement: "One doesn't make treaties with savages and expect to keep them" (taken from page 33, Bantam Books edition).

4. During the period of history with which this book is concerned, the United States is involved in two major wars: the Spanish-American War and World War I. How do these wars affect Oklahoma? How do you account for this effect?

5. What kind of picture of the American West did you get from reading the novel? According to both your notions and knowledge about the West, did you feel as you read the novel that Ferber was painting an accurate portrait? Support your answer to both parts of this question with selections from the novel.

6. According to Ferber, what was the life of the Oklahoma Indian like? Describe the physical condition of Indian life, the attitude(s) of the white population, and the Indian's political relationship to the state or territory. Also consider the effect which the discovery of oil had on Indian life.

ASSIGNMENT 2

THE OX-BOW INCIDENT

Reading Assignment: Walter Van Tilberg Clark, THE OX-BOW INCIDENT. And the "Afterward" by Walter Prescott Webb.

Writing Assignment:

From the following questions, answer one from Part A and one from Part B. Your third answer may be to any of the remaining five questions.

PART A

1. Davis stated (page 47, New American Library edition) that

> a lynch gang always acts in a panic before it can kill, so it doesn't ever really judge, but it just acts on what it's already decided to do, each man afraid to disagree with the rest.

Comment fully on this statement. Do you believe the mob in the story acted along these lines?

2. Do you think there was any point at which the mob could have been stopped? If so, when and by whom? If not, why?

3. Why did Croft, who seemed to be a level-headed person, go along with the mob's action?

PART B

4. Comment fully on the following statement (page 45, New American Library edition):

> By God, I hate the stink of an Injun, but an Injun smells sweet comparin' to a railroad man. If we'd wanted to keep this country for decent people, we'da helped the Injuns bust up the railroad.

5. What does this book tell you about the Nevada of the 1880's? What was the town like? the people? How did they live? How did they make a living?

6. What kind of picture has Clark painted of the American West? Does it differ and/or agree with any preconceived ideas of the West which you may have had before reading this novel?

7. If you have read CIMMARON, write an essay comparing and/or contrasting the American West as seen by Ferber and that seen by Clark.

ASSIGNMENT 3

THE OREGON TRAIL

Reading Assignment: Francis Parkman, THE OREGON TRAIL. And the "Foreword" by A. B. Guthrie, Jr.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. Comment fully on the following statement (page 232, New American Library edition):

> The human race in this part of the world is separated into three divisions, arranged in the order of their merits: white man, Indians, and Mexicans; to the latter of whom the honorable title of "whites" is by no means conceded.

2. Comment on the statement, "... if I could only carry the buffalo that are killed here every month down to St. Louis I'd make my fortune in one winter." In your answer, discuss the problems of transportation involved and the isolation of the area.

3. Much of this novel describes the lives of the various Indian tribes with which Parkman came in contact. In a general essay, discuss the structure of Indian life as Parkman depicts it.

4. Describe the relationship among the various Indian tribes. What do you think made some of the tribes more warlike than others?

5. Parkman and some of his friends were constantly occupied with killing buffalo. Compare the use Parkman and his friends made of the buffalo and the use the Indians made of that animal.

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UNIT II

RURAL AMERICA

UNIT II

RURAL AMERICA

America at the end of the Civil War (1865) was still a predominantly rural nation. This trend can clearly be seen in the employment and farming statistics for the period. In 1870, for example, 53 per cent of the working force was still associated with farm labor or related farm employment. (In 1820, agriculture claimed 72 per cent of the work force, but that number declined to 27 per cent in 1920.) We see a rise in the number of farms from 2.6 million in 1860 to 4.5 million in 1890. However, this fact is a bit misleading, for while there were more farms, there were fewer people working on them, as a result of modern industrial developments. The rapid industrialization process underway during this period stimulated not only the growth of modern factories and large cities, but also the manufacture of bigger and better machinery. Farmers thus could produce more goods with less physical labor. So, while the number of people actively involved in farm labor declined, the productivity of the farmer actually increased.

Although the image of rural life during this period is usually one of an isolated family living on a small, midwestern, family-owned farm, farming was not the sole occupation in rural America, nor was rural America confined to the area west of the Appalachians. People also lived and worked in small towns and villages (any town of less than 8,000 in a rural setting has usually been classified by the government as being "rural"). Life in these towns is important for any study of rural America, for we must remember that large areas in the East were also rural according to this definition.

The town provided the luxury goods, necessities, social life, and religious center for the local population. As you can imagine, the country towns were highly religious during this era. Often a village of only 500 inhabitants would boast four or even five churches, usually Protestant. The church served not only as a religious center of the community, but as the social center as well. Sponsoring fairs, picnics, ice cream socials, etc., the church was the magnet for all elements of the local society. Small towns were the homes and business centers for doctors, blacksmiths, tailors, merchants, etc.

Weekly or monthly newspapers served as information devices for townspeople and farmers. These newspapers were often in a very tenuous position, operating within a restricted budget and serving both merchants and farmers. Forced to rely upon the merchants for advertising and upon the farmers for subscriptions, the newspapers frequently took on a neutral role politically. In any period of economic recession they played the role of middleman between the merchants' rising prices and the farmers who felt the sting of the price rise. An excellent picture of the problems faced by a local newspaper is seen in E. W. Howe's THE STORY OF A COUNTRY TOWN.

Rural Americans have like to picture themselves as having a classless society, a place where hard work served as the "equalizer" for the population. Common sense and hard work were the only requirements for success. This is far from the truth, however. The so-called virtues of rural living are challenged by both Howe and William Dean Howells (see LANDLORD AT LION'S HEAD). Rural towns, for example, did have a structured society in which all people in the area knew everyone else. Bankers, for example, headed local society and, while they did business with all elements of the society, they usually did not invite the blacksmith to dinner on Saturday evening.

It is also assumed that rural towns liked and protected their small size. Even today one sees signs that welcome the visitor to "The Friendliest Little Town in America." However, most towns were founded hoping to become large and prosperous towns such as the county seat or perhaps even the state capital. The population usually hoped and worked for a railroad line or some type of industrial development. If they were frustrated in their attempts at development, rural townspeople made fun of or feared the sinful urban environment.

The rural environment, then, was a complex organism made up of a variety of social elements in both farm and town settings. Mark Twain's book focuses on yet another aspect of rural America-LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

ASSIGNMENT 1

THE STORY OF A COUNTRY TOWN

Reading Assignment: E. W. Howe, THE STORY OF A COUNTRY TOWN. And the "Afterward" by John William Ward.

Writing Assignment:

From the following questions, answer one from Part A and one from Part B. Your third answer may be from either Part A or B.

PART A

1. American writers have traditionally portrayed life in rural America as being more virtuous than urban life. According to this tradition, rural people teach the virtues of hard work and thrift, and develop good, prosperous (though not necessarily in the material sense) lives. What kind of picture of rural America does Howe depict in his novel? Did you feel, as you read it, that the picture you saw was a general representation of rural American life, or did it seem peculiar to this one small Kansas town?

2. Following the text of the novel (pages 310 and 313, New American Library edition) there are included a letter by Mark Twain and a review by William Dean Howells. Both of these writers have been included in this unit on rural America and their opinions on this novel could, therefore, provide you with some insights. Read these two selections and then analyze what both men have to say about the novel. Be sure to discuss those points which you felt were helpful to your understanding of the book, whether you agree or disagree with what they say, and why you feel as you do.

3. If you have read THE OX-BOW INCIDENT or CIMARRON from the unit on the American West, select some aspect of the life depicted in one of those novels and compare and/or contrast it with a similar situation in Howe's novel.

PART B

4. According to Howe's presentation, what role did religion play in rural America? (In your essay, you might discuss the roles of Reverend John Westlock and Reverend Goode Sheperad, the role of the church, and/or the attitudes of the town toward religion in general.)

5. There is very clearly a lack of verbal communication between most of the major characters in this novel. Although many characters were on intimate terms, they were unable to express their true feelings. What do you think caused this problem? Do you feel this was simply a nineteenth century phenomenon, or can you cite a similar circumstance within your own experience?

6. Based on the life of this country town, what do you determine was the role of women in agricultural society?

ASSIGNMENT 2

LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI

Reading Assignment: Mark Twain, LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI. And the "Afterward" by Leonard Kriegel.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. Discuss the many changes which affected life along the river as described in the novel from Part I through Part II. Can you speculate on what these changes imply about the nation as a whole during the 1800's?

2. Technological improvements soon made the job of a river pilot outmoded. This decline of an occupation is a most natural part of the process which industrial nations go through in their ever-moving push toward modernization. Have you ever witnessed or heard of a case comparable to that of the river pilot in which modern developments made a certain job unnecessary? If so, write an essay, discussing that case and comparing it to that of the pilots. What happened to the people involved?

3. In a general essay, describe the life along the Mississippi, asking yourself the following questions:

   a. How did the river affect the lives of the people?
   b. What kind of people lived along the river?
   c. What did the people there do for a living?
   d. In what ways were the river people different from the people who lived inland?

4. How did the development of the railroad affect commerce along the Mississippi? In what ways was or was not the development of the railroad a benefit to the people living along the river? Cite evidence from the novel to support your answer.

5. Discuss the role the Mississippi River played in the history of America. You may want to do some research in order to explore this topic as fully as possible.

ASSIGNMENT 3

THE LANDLORD AT LION'S HEAD

Reading Assignment: William Dean Howells, THE LANDLORD AT LION'S HEAD. And the "Afterward" by Eleanor M. Tilton.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. Compare and contrast the values of rural New England with those of Boston as depicted by Howells. Which area do you think the author preferred? Why?

2. Describe the characteristics of the various social classes that are represented in the novel. In your essay, place the main characters of the novel in their respective classes and explain why you have placed each where you have.

3. Describe the growth of Lion's Head from a small, bankrupt farm to a large, prosperous summer hotel. Include in your essay a description of the changes undergone by the people who ran the hotel and by those who stayed there.

4. What is the picture you have of life in rural New England as presented by Howells? Did you feel, as you read the novel, that Howells' picture could represent rural life in general, in New England, or in a small area of New England?

5. If you have read THE STORY OF A COUNTRY TOWN, compare and contrast rural life in that novel with that which Howells pictured.

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UNIT III

IMMIGRATION

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IMMIGRATION

The latter part of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century was a period of tremendous immigration into the United States. The immigrants often faced overwhelming problems; they had little money, frequently only enough to purchase passage to America. Still, they came, hopeful of becoming farmers or of finding jobs in America's growing industries.

Employment in American industry tripled between 1860 and 1900. The immigration statistics are staggering: between 1815 and 1920, over 35 million people left Europe for the United States. The biggest period of immigration was from 1870 to 1920. Consider, for example, the number of immigrants to America between 1870 and 1900:

Germany	2,760,000
United Kingdom	1,612,000
Ireland	1,481,000
Scandinavia	1,211,000
Southeastern Europe	1,056,000
Italy	1,015,000
Russia	920,000
Poland	190,000

The flood tide of immigration swelled the great industrial centers in the East and Midwest. The population of Philadelphia almost tripled in fifty years, increasing from 565,000 in 1869 to 1,549,000 in 1910. In the same period, New York City grew from 1,100,000 to 4,700,000. And the Chicago portrayed by Upton Sinclair in THE JUNGLE was transformed from a regional center of 100,000 people in 1860 to a world metropolis of 2,185,000 by 1910.

There were several reasons for this mass migration besides the promise of jobs and land. A case in point is the number of immigrants from the United Kingdom. England was the most industrialized nation in Europe and the standard of living was relatively high. Yet large numbers of people were unemployed. Some of the reasons were the adoption of the factory system in industry, the commercialization of farming, and the advances of science and technology. These improvements provided an impetus to population growth while, at the same time, lowering proportionately the necessary number of workers. The result was large-scale unemployment in a closed society. The only options for many of the unemployed were public welfare or emigration. Over one and a half million chose the latter.

Agriculture on the European continent also suffered a severe depression in the nineteenth century. Modern transportation allowed large shipments of foreign grain to be cheaply imported. The effect was disastrous. Tens of thousands of farmers from Germany and Scandinavia were driven from their farms, and with little opportunity for local employment, these farmers also journeyed to the United States.

Similar economic problems also affected Italy and Southeastern Europe, but restrictive governmental regulations forbidding emigration held Italian and Austrian-Hungarian peasants to the soil. However, when the restrictions were lifted in Italy (1860) and in Austria-Hungary (1867), the exodus to America began.

The European economic plight continued well into the twentieth century. The following figures relate the numbers of people who came to America between 1900 and 1920:

Southeastern Europe	3,522,000
Italy	3,156,000
Russia and Poland	2,519,000
United Kingdom	867,000
Germany	486,000

Economic reasons alone cannot account for America's magical appeal. When the poet Emma Lazarus wrote the inscription for the Statue of Liberty and referred to Europe's "huddled masses yearning to breathe free," she did not solely indulge in metaphor. To millions of Europeans the United States was the embodiment of political liberty. The right to vote, guarantees of civil liberties, and freedom from arbitrary and oppressive regimes were among the most important aspirations of the immigrants.

In Russia the assassination of the tsar in 1881 set off a series of anti-semitic pogroms. As a result, large numbers of Russian Jews came to America to escape the oppressive regime. (Of the total number of Russians entering the United States, 43 per cent were Jewish. This aspect of immigration is pictured clearly in THE RISE OF DAVID LEVINSKY.) Many of Germany's leading intellectuals and their political sympathizers also escaped to the United States in 1848 when their attempt to institute a liberal democratic system in Prussia failed. These refugees from tsarism, Hapsburg autocracy, and other oppressive political orders streamed into United States harbors. Of course, it is impossible to measure precisely the impact of political desire on immigration; political aspirations were often mixed with economic motives. Nevertheless, the concept of the United States as the world's ideal democracy was a potent force stimulating immigration. Many immigrants were able to escape the bad conditions of the factories and instead become farm owners in western America (the Scandinavians in GIANTS IN THE EARTH, for instance). However, many people from southern and eastern Europe came specifically to work in American factories, mines and mills. Unfortunately, these immigrants found their new home less than

a paradise. Their votes were often manipulated by cynical politicians (although even the most corrupt bosses often provided valuable services in return); their civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, were sometimes infringed upon by group pressures; and their yearning for acceptance was frequently thwarted by bigoted anti-foreign sentiment.

The overall record of the immigrant in the United States was mixed. For every newcomer who rose from rags to riches in the best Horatio Alger tradition, there were thousands who struggled for years in grinding poverty. The continued existence of Chinatowns and Little Italys point up the difficulty of assimilation. Yet the new-found right of participation in the political process and the hope that life could be better for their children, kindled a continuing faith. The nation could number many of its immigrants among its most fervent patriots.

ASSIGNMENT 1

THE RISE OF DAVID LEVINSKY

Reading Assignment: David Cahan, THE RISE OF DAVID LEVINSKY. And the Introduction by John Higham.

Writing Assignment:

From the following questions, answer one from Part A and two from Part B. (Answer three in all.)

PART A

1. The theories of Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin were used by a whole generation of rich industrialists in an attempt to justify the millions they made while the majority of the working class lived in dire poverty. If you are familiar with these theories (or would like to take the time to read about them now), discuss the reasons they would be especially attractive to the big businessman. Do you agree with the manner in which Levinsky used those theories? If so, defend his practices with well-thought-out arguments. If not, criticize his methods with well-thought-out arguments.

2. Describe the methods used by David Levinsky to build for himself one of the largest garment manufacturing factories in New York. Can you justify those methods? Why or why not?

PART B

3. Describe the conditions in Russia (as depicted in the book) which made America a desirable place to immigrate for many poor Russian Jews.

4. What preconceived ideas of America did Levinsky have before he left Russia? How did those ideas compare with the actual conditions he met upon his arrival in the United States?

5. Describe the process of David Levinsky's assimilation into the American culture.

6. Describe the role and growth of the Cloakmakers' Union. In what ways did Levinsky's views of the Union change? Why did his views change? How did he benefit from their strikes?

7. The novel presents a rather panoramic view of American Jewish life. Describe the most important features of that life and support your description with a few select episodes or characters which you feel are most representative.

ASSIGNMENT 2

THE JUNGLE

Reading Assignment: Upton Sinclair, THE JUNGLE. And the "Afterward" by Robert B. Downs.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. What problems did the immigrants in Sinclair's novel face when they came to America?

2. One of Sinclair's purposes in writing this novel was to present an appeal to socialism. Compare socialism and capitalism as depicted by Sinclair.

3. As a direct result of this novel, the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Beef Inspection Act became laws. Describe the conditions under which meat was processed before the passage of these acts.

4. The working conditions described in this novel are almost unbelievable, yet they are probably quite accurate. If you are familiar with the working conditions in a present-day factory, describe and compare what you have read about in the novel and the conditions you know about from your own experience. What forces do you think are responsible for the changes which have occurred since 1906?

5. In several places in his novel, Sinclair comments on the workings of the American political system in Chicago. It was, it seems, quite easy for the political machine to control elections. Comment on the operation of the registration of new immigrants, voting procedures, graft, political bosses, campaigns, etc.

6. What forces were at work in Chicago which brought about the ruin of Jurgis and his family despite the fact that they were kind and honest people who desired only to make a living and send their children to school?

ASSIGNMENT 3

GIANTS IN THE EARTH

Reading Assignment: O.E. Rölvaag, GIANTS IN THE EARTH. And the "Introduction" by Lincoln Colcord.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. Cheap, fertile land was perhaps America's greatest natural resource during her early days of growth and expansion. Describe the process which the pioneers had to go through in order to get their land.

2. What hardships did the settlers at Spring Creek have to face and overcome in establishing a farm in frontier South Dakota?

3. In what ways does Beret measure up to your notion of a typical frontier woman? In what ways does she seems atypical to you?

4. The Norwegian immigrants in this novel were forced to be clever, resourceful, and hardworking in order to survive the rigors of frontier life. Discuss some of the special qualities these people had which enabled them to live and prosper under such impossible conditions.

5. Like the other members of Spring Creek, Per Hansa had almost no cash to buy supplies. Yet he managed to procure almost everything his family needed. What method or methods did Per Hansa and the other people in the novel use to obtain the goods and other things they needed?

6. If you have read THE JUNGLE, compare and contrast the hardships faced by the Russian immigrants in Chicago with those faced by the Norwegian immigrants in South Dakota.

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UNIT IV

URBAN AND INDUSTRIAL AMERICA

UNIT IV

URBAN AND INDUSTRIAL AMERICA

The last half of the nineteenth century saw the rise of large urban communities in the United States. New York, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco, among others, became the financial and industrial centers of the nation. This growth of large cities was a recent development; in 1840, only one-twelfth of the American people lived in cities whose population was over 8,000. By 1860 the ratio had grown to one-sixth; by 1900 one-third of the population (25 million) lived in cities. This growth is shown even more clearly in the population figures of certain cities. Pittsburgh, for example, with a population of only 67,000 in 1850, expanded to 450,000 by 1900. In the same period Chicago grew from 30,000 to 1,7000,000; Los Angeles from a mere 5,000 to 100,000. Birmingham, Alabama, which was not founded until the 1870's, reached 38,000 by 1900.

The expansion of American industry stimulated the growth of urban areas. For instance, the booms of Pittsburgh and Birmingham resulted from the development of the Bessemer steel manufacturing process which made possible cheap, rapid production. Both Pittsburgh and Birmingham prospered as the demand for steel increased with railroad building and large construction. The tremendous growth of Chicago was also correlated to industrial development. Chicago, a trading post on Lake Michigan in 1831, grew by 1900 into a metropolitan area which served as a wheat port, a meat-packing and railroad center, and a distributing outlet for department stores and mail-order enterprises. The obvious reason for Chicago's growth was the industrial demand for workers. The Chamber of Commerce and individual businesses actively recruited workers. Foreign immigrants were a source as were the many farm workers in rural America. To illustrate the immigration into America by 1900, it is revelatory that over three-fourths of Chicago's population was foreign born! THE PIT presents an accurate view of life in Chicago during this period.

The physical size of the cities was impressive; it made great promotional publicity. However, cities growing as rapidly as those in America were bound to have serious problems. Little advance planning went into the building. Zoning was unknow; individuals were allowed to build factories or shops wherever they wished. In a time of laissez-faire, any control or restriction of individual initiative was discouraged. Cities provided few of the services requisite for urban life. Fire protection was poor in a period when most of the structures were wooden. The Chicago fire, for instance, destroyed most of the city in 1871. Police protection was inadequate. There was little concern for development of public transportation or recreational facilities. Slums developed as great numbers of people poured into the cities looking for jobs

and housing. Old buildings were turned into apartment houses with little regard for sanitation. The result was overcrowding and filthy living conditions. During this period not one American city filtered its water supply, even though sewage and garbage were dumped into the streams and rivers from which water supplies were drawn. This neglect accounts for several epidemics of typhoid fever during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Although this unit concentrates on urban problems, that particular topic cannot be isolated; several novels in this course are set in a more generalized urban environment--THE RISE OF DAVID LEVINSKY, THE JUNGLE, LOOKING BACKWARD, DEMOCRACY, and THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS. Also, you should remember the units of study are not to be regarded as separate entities. (THE JUNGLE, included in the unit on immigration, also relates to working conditions, political problems, social conditions, unhealthy food, etc.) Each of the novels is a small commentary on American history. If you wish, instead of answering the questions for one book, you can write a comparison of one of the above-mentioned novels with any of the books in this unit. Try to deal with what you think are the most important aspects of the novels from an historical point of view.

ASSIGNMENT 1

THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM

Reading Assignment: William Dean Howells, THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM. And the "Afterward" by Harry T. Moore.

Writing Assignment:

Discuss any three of the following:

1. The successful industrialist represented a segment of the American population which was much admired in the late nineteenth century; hence Silas Lapham's place in the "Solid Men of Boston" series. Discuss the virtues that a successful man of these times was supposed to possess. Draw your evidence for each characteristic from specific episodes in the novel.

2. While Lapham was wealthy, his money was not sufficient to gain him admittance into the upper strata of Boston society. Discuss the factors which prevented the Laphams from being fully accepted into this group. Can you draw any parallels with present-day society as you know it?

3. The industrialist of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has often been depicted as a rather immoral (and even amoral) character who would use any means to make more money. Working conditions during this period were horrible and business tycoons would often revert to the most unscrupulous methods to drive their competition out of business. Yet, Howells does not present Lapham in this manner. Discuss the picture you do have of Lapham: what kind of man was he to work for? was he honest? could he have prevented his fall? etc.

4. In this novel you are presented with at least one picture of the undertaking of and the problems inherent in a nineteenth century courtship--as both an individual and a social concern. Discuss the most important aspects and problems of the courtship of Tom Corey and Penelope Lapham. Compare and contrast their experience with the courtship of young people today--from the standpoint of either your own experience or of some contemporary fiction you have read, but be specific.

5. If you have read THE RISE OF DAVID LEVINSKY, compare and contrast the characters and methods of Levinsky and Lapham. Which man comes through as more "real" to you? Why?

ASSIGNMENT 2

THE PIT

Reading Assignment: Frank Norris, THE PIT.

Writing Assignment:

Answer at least one question from Part A; your remaining two essays may be written on any of the other questions from Part A or B.

PART A

1. What is the general picture of Chicago which you can draw from this novel? What was the city itself like? What kind of people lived there? How did they live?

2. Upton Sinclair's novel, THE JUNGLE, also deals with certain aspects of Chicago around the turn of the century. If you have read THE JUNGLE, compare and contrast Chicago and the city life as depicted by Sinclair and Norris.

PART B

3. Discuss thoroughly the roles of a "bear" and a "bull" in the wheat market.

4. Comment fully on the following statement (page 129, Grove Press edition):

> If we send the price of wheat down too far, the farmer suffers, the fellow who raises it; if we send it up too far, the poor man in Europe suffers, the fellow who eats it.

5. How was it possible for Curtis Jadwin to get a corner on the wheat market? In your essay, discuss both the prevalent condition of the market and Jadwin's know-how and methods.

6. What force or forces defeated Jadwin in his battle for a lasting corner on the wheat market?

7. Explain the process of buying and selling short and demonstrate your explanation with references to events in the novel.

ASSIGNMENT 3

MCTEAGUE

Reading Assignment: Frank Norris, MCTEAGUE.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. What is the picture of city life depicted in this novel? Consider the types of people who lived there, how they made a living, the different social classes they represented.

2. Comment fully on the implications of the following statement (page 210, Fawcett Publications edition):

> "I wonder," she murmured, "I wonder if he's got any money he don't tell me about. I'll have to look out for that."

3. Norris depicts McTeague and his wife in a moral and physical degeneration. What do you understand to be the factors which precipitated this degeneration? Was it simply the desire for money? Were these people trapped by the society in which they lived?

4. If you have read any of the books in the Rural America section, compare and contrast the way of life pictured by Howe, Twain, or Howells with that of Norris.

5. In your opinion, why does Norris paint such a bleak picture of life?

6. Select a specific chain of events, a theme, or a problem in McTeague's way of life and compare it with a similar phenomenon in contemporary urban American life. Be specific in the parallels you draw, both in your references to the novel and to today. Try to speculate on the reasons for the similarities and differences in the two scenes.

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UNIT V

UTOPIAN AMERICA

UNIT V

UTOPIAN AMERICA

Attempts to construct a "perfect" society in America date from early nineteenth century endeavors to the communes of today. Robert Owen, a British utopian socialist who believed in economic and political equality, tried to form a utopian community at New Harmony, Indiana, in 1825. Owen advocated free love and atheism, but failed, for the residents of New Harmony were unable to work together for the future of the community. Nevertheless between 1830 and 1860 more than forty utopian communities were established. It was during this period that Henry David Thoreau retired to Walden Pond to prove man could live without the constraints of modern society.

What then is utopia? It is the creation of an ideal society. The people involved hope to avoid the mistakes of civilization and build instead a perfect society upon those human traits which they believe to be most constructive. For example, most utopians are disgusted by man's constant desire for material wealth; they contend that man can function better in simple communication with nature. Elaborate structures and modern conveniences are unnecessary; this was as true in 1825 as it is today. Utopian societies are based on the supposition that man's nature is generally good. Therefore, a complex government with prohibitive laws is undesirable for human development. In fact, such government would retard human achievement, not enhance it.

Most people are skeptical about utopian thought. Utopians are usually labeled "harmless dreamers" unable to comprehend the nature of man or society. The Christian ethic teaches that man's basic nature is evil. Those opposed to utopian thought contend that man will behave only if society punishes bad behavior. Therefore, government and laws are necessary to punish those whose actions are unacceptable to society. The latter premise is built on a negative foundation while the utopian concept is erected on a positive construct of man and society. So while each group's goals are the same, their means for achieving it differ.

Utopian literature often expresses some of the above-mentioned concepts. The focal point usually centers on an ideal political structure or non-structure which results in a society superior to the present. Utopian writings are also generally based on the author's actual social conditions. Utopian literature, which is usually future oriented, often reflects the author's own time as much as the ideal society predicted. For instance, Ignatius Donnelly could view an industrialized America, which he feared, and predict a future society in which

individual rights, freedoms, and human values would be lost. On the other hand, Edward Bellamy, writing in the same period, saw the evils of competition in American society and predicted that everyone in the future would lead safe, middle-class lives.

One must be careful in reading utopian literature; it is after all fantasy--but fantasy with a definite political and social position. The two novels in this unit are very definite comments on nineteenth-century America. The authors of utopian literature, attempting to make their views clear, often exaggerate social, political, and economic conditions of their own period. Therefore, it is necessary to approach the novels in this unit even more carefully than in others. This does not mean, however, that all elements in both novels are exaggerations--only that some aspects of one or both may be--so the reader should be cautious.

ASSIGNMENT 1

LOOKING BACKWARD

Reading Assignment: Edward Bellamy, LOOKING BACKWARD. And the "Foreward" by Erich Fromm.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. Bellamy presents a rather dismal view of life in nineteenth century America. Select one of the many aspects of nineteenth century life depicted by Bellamy and compare or contrast it with his solution to or treatment of the same problem in the twenty-first century.

2. In general terms, what did Bellamy find to be the major faults of the nineteenth century?

3. Bellamy foresees a world in which every person will share equally in the society. To the best of your ability (and, you may want to do some outside preparation for this), explain why you do or do not believe that Bellamy's concept of the "industrial army" could work. Be specific in your criticisms or support, basing your conclusions on concrete evidence you have learned from reading or personal experience.

4. What are the evils of capitalism according to Bellamy? What alternative system does he advocate? Does that system rectify the evils he sees in capitalism? Does it, in your opinion, threaten to generate any new evils?

5. Describe the government of the twenty-first century as envisioned by Bellamy. In what ways do you believe his government to be an improvement over the nineteenth century government? What weaknesses do you find in his proposed government? Be specific.

6. In a general essay, describe the life of the twenty-first century as conceived by the author. You will not be able to treat all the changes imagined, so you are advised to select those which seem to you to be the most important. (In addition, you should restrict yourself to those aspects which you have not already dealt with in a specific way in other questions on this lesson.) Your treatment of Bellamy's utopia should be a constructively critical one: your support, if any, should be well-thought-out; and any arguments

against aspects which you believe are not possible or beneficial to man should be specifically stated and supported with as much evidence as you have at your disposal.

7. If you have read any of the books in the Urban and Industrial America selection, select a problem of city life as pictured in one (or, if possible, two) of those novels and compare it with a similar nineteenth century problem pictured by Bellamy. If there is any solution implicit in the urban author's presentation, compare it with Bellamy's utopian solution.

8. If you have read THE JUNGLE, compare and contrast the major aspects of Sinclair's socialist "answer" with Bellamy's twenty-first century "answer."

ASSIGNMENT 2

CAESAR'S COLUMN

Reading Assignment: Ignatius Donnelly, CAESAR'S COLUMN. And the "Introduction" by Walter B. Rideout.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. Writing in the late nineteenth century, Donnelly was particularly concerned about the growing political corruption and the accumulation of power and wealth by a relatively small number of men. He assumed that these conditions would continue unchecked from his time through the twentieth century. Write an essay describing the most important characteristics of late nineteenth century life as seen by Donnelly. Can you speculate as to why he was so pessimistic about America's ability to overcome some of the evils he saw?

2. Chapter 12 of the novel depicts the "perfect world" through Gabriel's eyes. Assuming that Donnelly is presenting a system which will remedy the evils of the nineteenth century, select those concepts which seem to you to be the most important in his utopia and discuss them critically in relation to the nineteenth century conditions which they pretend to rectify.

3. Basing his concepts on the world he saw around him, Donnelly does not appear very optimistic about what the future held for that world. Using present conditions as a jumping off point, write a speculative, creative essay about the life of the twenty-first, twenty-second, or two hundreth century as you believe it may be.

4. The Brotherhood for Destruction believed that their world had passed the point where constructive reform within the system was possible or even desirable. Our world today is also faced with many problems and has given rise to many political groups which believe that reform within the system is no longer possible or desirable. Consider both the Brotherhood and today's radical left groups in a comparative and contrasting manner. Comment critically on both groups, in terms of the problems confronting their worlds and the legitimacy of their assumption that meaningful reform within the system was not workable. (If you are not familiar with the recent activities of the leftist movements in the United States, you will need to do a little reading of current news media and even other sources; otherwise, you should restrict yourself to addressing this question in terms of the Brotherhood alone.)

5. In Chapter 40, Donnelly presents his "perfect" government, "The Garden in the Mountains." On the basis of your knowledge about political systems, write a critical analysis of this government, discussing both its strengths and weaknesses as you see them. (You may want to do a little reviewing to provide you with some background concepts for your response here.)

6. If you have read THE JUNGLE or LOOKING BACKWARD, compare and contrast the problems of nineteenth century life in one of those novels with those presented by Donnelly. Of the two solutions which the authors proposed, which seems to be the more workable to you and why? (For the purpose of dealing with this in specific terms, you may want to restrict yourself to one or two problems or issues which the two books have in common.)

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* Denotes a work of fiction.

UNIT VI

POLITICAL PROBLEMS

UNIT VI

POLITICAL PROBLEMS

In the period from 1865 to 1910 American politics was corrupted. People were offering or accepting bribes at all levels of government. One of the most famous examples of corruption on the federal level was the Crédit Mobilier scandal in 1872. A federal investigation revealed that congressmen had accepted stock in the Crédit Mobilier construction company and then allocated appropriations for that corporation. The company was paid over 90 million dollars for construction work on the Union Pacific Railroad that was actually valued at 50 million dollars.

Political machines dominated by political bosses ran the governments at state and local levels. In most cities power rested in the hands of one man (the mayor) or in a small group of men (the city council). The mayor or the council determined how municipal funds would be spent, what projects would be undertaken, and what company or companies would receive the contract. It was easy for an unscrupulous person to gain control of city hall.

The system would work something like this: a man with money would begin working in a local ward populated by the indigent. He would provide jobs, distribute food to those out of work, resolve any problems these people might have with the police--in short, dispense valuable political and economic services to the needy. In return, these beneficiaries were expected to vote for their political patron. With imagination and money a man could progress from control of a ward to control of a city or state.

The most famous example of a city boss was William M. Tweed of New York. He swindled millions of dollars from the taxpayers from the 1860's to 1871. Tweed instructed city employees to pad their bills. The difference between the actual cost and the padded amount went to Tweed. Using this method, he was able to build a three million dollar court house for eleven million dollars. Anyone who performed a service for the city had to promise a kickback. Much of this corruption has been blamed on the immigrants; they came to America without any experience in mass political participation and eagerly cooperated with men like Tweed. However, corruption was too wide-spread in American politics to blame the success of this dissolute system on the immigrants. For instance, Tweed was able to control not only New York City but also the state legislature, and few immigrants were elected to serve in Albany during Tweed's reign.

As this corruption spread, people began to do something about it. A small group of journalists, branded "muckrakers" by President Theodore Roosevelt, exposed many evils in American society. One of the most famous "muckrakers"

was Lincoln Steffens. In his book, THE SHAME OF THE CITIES (1906), Steffens investigated Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Minneapolis, and St. Louis and found them all run by political bosses. (An excellent account of Steffens and his findings is presented in THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS.)

Not everyone or every institution was corrupt although democracy was having problems during this period. There were many people unwilling to allow a government of a small group of political bosses. Through the writing of the "muckrakers" and the concern of the voting public, city and state governments were reformed. The lesson for the American populace is clear: democracy depends on a literate and concerned public. If people accept the spoils system, the results will be deteriorative. Both Henry Adams in DEMOCRACY and Lincoln Steffens in his autobiography felt the people had rejected their role of political responsibility and that the result was an inefficient, corrupt government.

ASSIGNMENT 1

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS

Reading Assignment: Lincoln Steffens, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS, Volume II, Part III, pp. 357-627.

Writing Assignment:

Answer any three of the following:

1. Throughout his autobiography, Steffens insists that "big business" is the element really responsible for the graft and corruption he saw in American politics because it is the group which has the money to keep the system going. Do you agree or disagree with Steffens? Why? Do you think it is legitimate to blame any one group for widespread corruption?

2. This book presents you with a very graphic and clear picture of "Boss" politics, a system which is not altogether unknown today. Based on your reading here, describe how the boss system works. How is one man able to run a city or a state? Is the "Boss" always an elected official? How does he keep his power? What are the evils of the system? What are the benefits?

3. What did Steffens mean by "privileged business"? Why did he want to eliminate all the privileged business in society? How did he think this would help limit corruption? Are you aware of any "privileged business" that exists in the United States today? If so, how does that business use its privileged position to influence government?

4. Time and again in the cities Steffens visited, reform leaders were able to oust the political bosses from power and to elect reforming men to office. Reform officials were unable to accomplish much while they were in office, however. According to Steffens, why did the reformers fail, even when they were elected to office?

5. Lincoln Steffens suggested that the leading grafters (the bosses) should lead the reform movement if it were to be successful (see p. 614). Comment on this idea.

6. Comment on this statement from page 413 of the book:

> Political corruption. . . is then, not a process. It is not a temporary evil, not an accidental wickedness, not a passing symptom of the youth of a people. It is a natural process by which democracy is gradually made over into a plutocracy.

7. If you have read THE JUNGLE, compare and contrast the political machine Lewis presents with Steffens' view.

ATTENTION!

After you have completed and mailed in the last assignment, you may make application for final examination. Simply follow these directions:

1. Turn to the back of this outline and tear out the Application for Final Examination (for College Courses).

2. Fill in the application form and mail it under separate cover to the Extramural Independent Study Center.

3. Be sure to mail your application early enough that it will reach the Extramural Independent Study Center at least one week before the day on which you wish to take the test.*

4. For possible dates and places of examination, see the Supervised Examination Schedule sent to you (shortly after enrollment) with your lesson materials.

*Because of mailing problems, students overseas must give more than three weeks' notice of their intention to stand examination upon given date.

ASSIGNMENT 2

DEMOCRACY

Reading Assignment: Henry Adams. DEMOCRACY. New York: The New American Library, 1961. And the "Foreward" by Henry David Aiken.

Writing Assignment:

Answer one question from Part A and one from Part B. Your third answer may be from either Part A or B.

PART A

1. There has been a continuing controversy over the real source of power in American government. Comment on this statement from Page 102:

> The truth was that Radcliffe had now precisely ten days before the new cabinet could be set in motion, and in these ten days he must establish his authority over the President so firmly that nothing could shake it.

2. Discuss the role of a lobbyist in the American democratic system.

3. What picture do you get of American democracy from this novel? Do you agree or disagree with Adams' assessment? Why?

PART B

4. The Presidency is the highest and supposedly the most powerful office in this country, yet Adams presents a none-too-flattering view of the office and the men who fill it. Discuss Adams' description of the Presidency as an office and, in particular, the President from Indiana.

5. The whole problem of office-seekers plagued the government until the assassination of President Garfield. This murder led to the passage of the Pendleton Act which placed many jobs under a three-man Civil Service Commission. Adams presents a picture of subsequent government corruption and patronage. Discuss these problems with respect to the ideal of democratic rule.

6. Radcliffe would have Mrs. Tee believe that there are several types of morality, at least for politicians. Discuss Radcliffe's ideas. Do you think he is right when he states that a politician must sometimes do distasteful things for the good of the party?

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1. Do not send in this application until you have completed and mailed the last assignment of the course. IF YOU SUBMIT THIS EXAMINATION REQUEST FORM EARLIER, IT WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU.

2. Mail this application separately. Do not include it with the last lesson.

3. Fill out "Date Desired" after consulting the "Supervised Examination Schedule Announcement" sent with lesson materials. High school students should make arrangements with their high school principal or counselor to supervise the examination.

4. Furnish your own writing materials. Bring a pen (or pencil, if specified in the syllabus).

5. Pay the examiner postage for mailing your paper to the Extramural Independent Study Center.

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ASSIGNMENT NO. III - page 2

ERVED FOR INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENTS

3 Question:
How does the Nurse serve as a foil to Juliet? Explain briefly

Answer:

The Nurse serves as a foil to Juliet by furnishing a contrast to her youth, purity, and sincerity. Just as Juliet is the epitome of freshness and wholesome beauty, both mental and physical, so the Nurse is the essense of coarseness. Even the Nurse's jests are vulgar (see I, iv, 40-45) in contrast to Juliet's puns which are pure poetry -- "and palm to palm is holy palmer's kiss," I, v, 102. Just as the Nurse has lived through many births and deaths, Juliet's knowledge of either birth or death is by hearsay only. When the play opens, the daughter of the Capulets is so inexperienced and maidenly in her thoughts that her

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NOTE This is a sample of the special stationery for the Extramural Independent Study Center. In preparing this or any other kind of paper for mailing, after you have completed the assignment, please fold so that your lesson identification appears on the top of the outer fold. Your name and address should always present themselves immediately to the person opening the envelope.